

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 034208 TOSEC 020027
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TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 034208 TOSEC 020027

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT DOHA 204 ACTION SECSTATE INFO ABU DHABI
JIDDA KUWAIT MANAMA MUSCAT SANA TEHRAN 15 FEB 77

QUOTE S E C R E T DOHA 0204

EXDIS

DEPT PLEASE PASS TO
SECRETARYS PARTY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, PFOR, QA, US

SUBJECT: AMIR OF QATAR EXPRESSES INTEREST IN F-5'S

REF: 76 DOHA 862, 76 DOHA 968, 76 STATE 220256

1. DURING FEB 15 CONVERSATION, AMIR OF QATAR, SHAYKH
KHALIFA BIN HAMAD AL THANI, RAISED WITH ME HIS INTEREST
IN F-5 AIRCRAFT. KHALIFA NOTED THAT QATARI AIR FORCE'S
HAWKER HUNTERS WERE OBSOLETE AND F-5'S APPEARED TO BE SUIT-

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ABLE REPLACEMENT. AMIR SPOKE IN TERMS OF NEED FOR "ABOUT
15" AIRCRAFT. HE SAID QATARIS FAVORABLY IMPRESSED WITH F-5'S
THEY HAD SEEN IN SAUDI ARABIA AND JORDAN. HE INDICATED
GOQ HAD ALSO BEEN LOOKING AT FRENCH AIRCRAFT.

2. IN RESPONDING, I RECALLED PREVIOUS EXPRESSION OF
INTEREST IN F-5'S BY SHAYKH HAMAD BIN KHALIFA AL THANI,

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF QATARI ARMED FORCES (AND AMIR'S SON) IN AUGUST 1976. (REFTELS). I TOLD AMIR THAT WE HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO RESPOND AS YET TO SHAYKH HAMAD'S REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON F-5'S. I OUTLINED FOR KHALIFA CURRENT US ARMS POLICY OF NOT RPT NOT SELLING SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENT TO LOWER GULF STATES. I OBSERVED THAT NEW ADMINISTRATION WAS INTENSELY CONCERNED AT LEVEL OF US ARMS SALES; PARTICULARLY IN THIS AREA, AND QUESTION CURRENTLY UNDER STUDY IN WASHINGTON. I SAID THAT SUBJECT COULD BE DISCUSSED AT AREA COM'S MEETING WITH SECRETARY IN RIYADH AND PERHAPS AFTER THIS I WOULD BE ABLE TO SAY MORE ON SUBJECT.

3. KHALIFA SPECIFIED THAT HIS RAISING SUBJECT WAS NOT RPT NOT TO BE CONSIDERED AN "OFFICIAL REQUEST" FOR SALE OF F-5'S TO GOQ, BUT RATHER A "DECLARATION OF INTEREST" IN PURCHASING SUCH AIRCRAFT. HE ASSURED ME THAT GOQ HAD NO RPT NO INTENTION OF BUILDING UP "OFFENSIVE STRIKE FORCE", BUT IT WAS SIMPLY A MATTER OF TURNING IN OLD MODELS FOR NEW. HE REMARKED THAT HE COULD PROBABLY OBTAIN AIRCRAFT FROM FRENCH, BUT F-5 APPEARED TO BE IDEAL AIRCRAFT FOR QATAR.

4. COMMENT: I EXPECT THAT SALES OF ARMS TO LOWER GULF STATES WILL BE DISCUSSED AT COM MEETING. WE HAVE NEVER ENCOURAGED QATARIS TO SEEK ARMS FROM U.S. SOURCES. HOWEVER, IT SHOULD BE BORNE IN MIND THAT QATARI ATTITUDE TOWARD POSSIBLE REFUSAL TO SUPPLY F-5'S OR OTHER SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENT TO THIS COUNTRY WILL BE CONDITIONED BY WHAT WE DO IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY BAHRAIN AND UAE.

PAGANELLI

UNQUOTE HARTMAN

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